

0909
The Duty of Benevolence and Public Spirit:

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT

Salters-Hall, April 7th, 1775.

BEFORE

THE CORRESPONDENT BOARD IN LONDON

OF THE

SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND

(Incorporated by Royal Charter)

FOR

PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

In the Highlands and Islands,

AND FOR

SPREADING THE GOSPEL

Among the Indians in America.

By PHILIP FURNEAUX, D. D.

Published at the Request of the Society and their
Correspondent Board in London.

L O N D O N:

Printed by W. STRAHAN, Printer to the Society; and to be
had from T. CADELL, and J. DONALDSON, in the Strand;
J. BUCKLAND, Pater-Noster-row; and G. KEITH, Grace-
Church-street. 1775.

LONDON, 7th April, 1775.

At a Board of the Correspondent Members in London of the Society in Scotland (incorporated by Royal Charter) for Propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands, and for Spreading the Gospel among the Indians in America,

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Board be given to the Rev. DR. FURNEAUX for his excellent Sermon preached this day before the Board, and that he be desired to permit the same to be printed for the Use of the Society.

J. MACKINTOSH, Secretary.

N. B. This and the other Annual Sermons preached before the Society, at Edinburgh, and the Correspondent Board in London; together with a full and accurate Account of the Society, from its Commencement in 1709, including the present State of the Highlands and Islands with regard to Religion, lately printed; may be had from the Secretary, No. 23, Lothbury.



TO

The Right Honourable

THOMAS Earl of KINNOULL,

PRESIDENT of the GENERAL COURT,

The Right Honourable

DAVID Earl of LEVEN and MELVILL,

PRESES of the Committee of DIRECTORS,

AND THE OTHER

MEMBERS AND BENEFACTORS

OF THE

SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND

FOR

PROPAGATING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

THIS DISCOURSE

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

To The Right Honourable

~~THOMAS LORD OF KILMARNOCK~~

PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL COURT

From my Lordship's House

DAVID HARRISON and others

PRAYERS of the Court of Directors

I we consider ourselves as subjects of God's moral government, and as members of a society of rational creatures, having a mutual relation, and the common interest, it plainly appears that a regard to the divine glory, and to the happiness of our fellow-creatures should be always maintained in connection with the duties of our civil and political obligations. And such, indeed, is the nature of the laws, and in particular, to the utmost of our ability, the good of others.



THE AUTHOR
But here the happiness is, that being creatures compounded of body as well as mind, having animal appetites and passions, which are sometimes eager and insatiable, and a private and separate interest as to temporal things, to which we are really to give an undue preference, from hence I say it arises that a restraint, yea, a necessity of rational

Rom. xiv. 7. First Clause.

For none of us liveth to himself.

IF we consider ourselves as subjects of God's moral government, and as members of a society of reasonable creatures, having a mutual relation, and one common interest; it plainly appears, that a regard to the divine glory, and to the happiness of our fellow-men should be always maintained in the closest connection with that desire of our own happiness, to which we are carried by a natural and irresistible impulse. And such, indeed, is the divine constitution and the nature of things, that our own true happiness can only be secured in a course of dutiful obedience to the divine laws, and in promoting, to the utmost of our ability, the good of others.

But here the unhappiness is, that being creatures compounded of body as well as mind, having animal appetites and instincts which are sometimes eager and impetuous, and a private and separate interest as to temporal things, to which we are ready to give an undue preference; from hence, I say, it arises, that a selfishness, unworthy of our

B

rational

rational and social natures, is apt to prevail in us; which often extinguishes, or at least controuls, the genuine workings of divine love and human benevolence; and through a false pride, or regard to our ease or interest, we are reluctant to make any, the least concession of our private rights or personal gratifications, even for the great end of advancing the divine glory and the general good. Whereas a due respect to the obligations of our reasonable natures, to the interests of society, and to our own interest properly understood, would enforce the practice of every duty, to God and man.

When the primitive Christians were engaged in quarrels and contentions, in censures and condemnations of each other, almost to the extinction of their mutual benevolence and brotherly affection; the source of all this was an over-weening pride, and a high conceit of their own judgments, together with a mean opinion or contempt of others: every one was set on having his own way, and on censuring those who could not see things in the same light in which he saw them, or would not submit the matters in question to his infallible decision. To remedy this, the Apostle Paul not only urges the comparative indifference of the things about which they contended; and that, while in forming their several judgments they all professed a like regard to the divine authority, they ought to bear with, and exercise mutual candor towards, one another; but he likewise endeavours

to lead them out of the narrow circle of *themselves*;—that they might take a comprehensive and just survey of their duty, as men, and members of society, the great society of mankind, and the lesser one of Christians: for Christianity is so far from dissolving, that it strengthens the social bond between man and man; and every duty, which is laid upon us by nature, is confirmed by the Gospel of Christ.

This I apprehend to be the Apostle's intention in suggesting the excellent aphorism contained in the text: **NONE OF US LIVETH TO HIMSELF.** On which I propose to discourse in the following manner:

FIRST, To mark out some of the principal distinctions between that man who "lives to himself," and him who lives to the good of others. And,

SECONDLY, To shew the obligations which mankind are under to benevolence, and a public spirit; or, in the language of the text, to "live not to themselves," but to the good of others.

And with respect to the character of him who "lives to himself:" in general, he is one who hath no end of life, or none at which he steadily aims; but what centers in himself; he makes his own ease, his own humour, his own pride, his own

pleasure, or worldly interest, the principal object of his attention; having no prevailing regard to the divine honour, no tender solicitude for his fellow-men, either to alleviate their misery or augment their happiness; at least no such ardent aspirations as are effectual to excite his vigorous endeavours to that end, enabling him to find his own highest satisfaction in promoting theirs: a satisfaction, to a benevolent mind, infinitely surpassing every sensual gratification, or worldly enjoyment, whatsoever! And undoubtedly such a man discovers a very unnatural state of mind. While he is endeavouring to efface those touches of humanity, and erase those feelings of benevolence, which are among the distinguishing glories of his nature, he is acting directly counter to the divine establishment; and were such a temper and conduct universally to prevail, the worst consequences would ensue, and the world be rendered a scene of confusion, and mutual injury. But these consequences will be considered more properly hereafter: it is my present design to delineate the character, at least to set before you some of its most striking and remarkable features; that you may be able to distinguish, and avoid, the like temper and conduct; or to correct them, should you find them in yourselves: and I am much mistaken, if we do not all find them in ourselves, in a greater or less degree. I observe then,

In the *first* place. That he who hath any capacity for public usefulness, and for promoting the good of others, and yet wholly neglects the improvement of it, may be properly said to "live to himself." No man is made to be a cypher in the creation. Every one hath his station and post allotted him; and be it what it will, ever so high or ever so low, there is a duty resulting from it. If we compare society (as it hath sometimes been compared) to the natural body, no sound member is intended to be wholly useless: or, if we compare it to a great machine, it will not go on with regularity and ease, and discharge its proper functions, if every movement do not perform the part assigned it. He, therefore, who, "living only to himself," utterly neglects to improve the talents committed to his trust, does what he can to put a stop to the regular motions of society, and throw it into confusion; by deserting his station in it, and refusing to take on him his proper share of the duties and burdens of it. The very end of society would be defeated, if all men should act in this manner; and before any one claims a right to do it, he ought to produce a divine warrant for that purpose; because the duties of social life, from which he is willing to be excused, result from a divine establishment.

Age and bodily infirmities, indeed, amount to an exemption from active services: Nevertheless, even the aged and the infirm, who are in opulent cir-

circumstances, may be very useful in the world by a wise application of the substance with which God hath blessed them; and instead of being exempted from this particular branch of their duty by their situation, they seem to be thereby laid under peculiar obligation to discharge it, in order to make up for that inability of personally serving the public, which arises from their mental or bodily infirmities.

If we bury our talents, of whatsoever kind they are, in the earth, wholly unconcerned about improving them, we can be considered only as making that kind of vacant and insipid satisfaction, which results merely from being free from trouble, the height of our ambition: which surely is, at best, to aim at no very great things; and will in the issue, if I mistake not, render us deservedly contemptible in the eyes of all wise and good men. Such utter inattention to the happiness of others, is not really consistent with a due regard to our own; and a torpid insensibility to both, does not deserve the name of "living." To live is not to breathe, and, like insects, crawl upon the earth; it is to exert our active powers in worthy pursuits, and to do good in the world: to live, is to enjoy life, by improving it for the advancement of our own happiness, the glory of God, and the welfare of our fellow-creatures. Again,

Secondly,

Secondly, The professed votary of pleasure "lives to himself." There are many of this character who seem to have no other, or however, no higher aim, than to pass away their lives, not as usefully and honourably, but as gayly and thoughtlessly, as they are able. I do not merely intend those who are engaged in the pursuit of criminal pleasures, such as the Sensualist or the Debauchee, who lay no restraint on their appetites; but such as are engaged in a continual round of amusements, making them a stated, if not a serious, business, and the principal employment of their lives; who are miserable when they are not merry and jovial; and who, as soon as one party of pleasure, or scene of diversion, is ended, are presently devising another; and are quite wretched, till the appointed hour of fashionable dissipation commences.

Now this I take to be the reigning vice of the age: people in general are addicted to diversions, and swallowed up in them. The contagion is not confined to the higher ranks of life, or to the time of youth; but it hath in a great measure infected both sexes, every age and order; persons of low condition, as well as those of rank and station: Inasmuch that the disorder is, at length, become epidemical; to the extinction, almost, of all private and social duty: I had nearly said, of all public and national virtue.

I would not be thought to be an enemy to those recreations which are consistent with men's circumstances,

stances, and with fulfilling the duties of their respective stations; and which are adapted (as all diversions should be) to relieve or remove the fatigue of business, and thus prepare the powers of body and mind for fresh application. The sin, here, lies in the excess: in making our diversions, either a daily employment; or so very expensive to us, as to deprive us of all inclination, perhaps of all ability, with justice to our families or commercial connections, of performing any acts of private charity, or assisting any generous, public-spirited design. "To be given to pleasures, and to dwell carelessly *," is unmanly as well as unchristian: it enervates all the powers of body and mind. Such persons often pretend they have no TIME (they are so much occupied by their perpetual round of engagements); certain it is, they have NO HEART for the discharge of the plainest duties, either to God or man.

If any man's circumstances exempt him from the necessity of following business for a livelihood, and he be not engaged in the service of the public, he ought, as he undoubtedly may, to find himself some useful employment suitable to his talents; at least, to lay out some portion of his substance in such a way, as to promote the divine honour, and the good of his fellow-men. If he be a Christian in reality, and not merely in profession, he will do this; and render his life, thereby, of some im-

* *Isai. xlvii. 8.*

portance in the world; whereas spending it in vanity, and dissipation, and an eternal chase of pleasure, if it may be styled "living," is at most "living only to a man's self;" and making his own private gratification, and that a very mean and sordid one, the end of his existence.

If it should be granted, "that the expences attending his luxury are of service to some of his fellow-creatures;" this, however, is only an accidental benefit, which they derive from him without any intention of his: it his governing aim to gratify his own depraved taste for what he styles, pleasure.

Farther, *thirdly*, That man may properly be classed under the character I am now describing, who having already made, or who under pretence of making, a decent and honourable provision for himself and those who are dependent on him, is either too eager and intent on acquiring wealth; or reluctant in parting with what he can conveniently spare, for the good of others.

I readily admit, a desire of being serviceable to others ought not to exclude, or take place of, a just concern for ourselves; much less is a regard for the more distant members of society to supersede, or interfere with, our making that provision, which we are bound, in the first place, to make

C

for

for those who are immediately related to, or dependent on us; and which may render them and us comfortable and useful in the world. But when this is done, a keen solicitude and rapaciousness in amassing wealth, and a shyness and backwardness in relieving those who are in distress, or in contributing to the support, or the enlargement, of any useful and public-spirited undertaking; undoubtedly this discovers that a man is in the number of those who "live to themselves;" that he hath a contracted mind and a sordid selfishness, inconsistent with the exercise of manly, social, benevolent affections, and with being heartily concerned for the good of others. Accumulation is his supreme felicity; gold is his god; self-love prompts him first to collect it together, and then to hoard it; and the larger his possessions are, the more his avaricious desires increase, and his worldly disposition is strengthened; till, being wrapt up in himself and his own narrow views, he forgets that he is a member of society, and a steward of this world's goods; and that he who hides his talent in the earth, and makes no improvement of it, shall be doomed to "have his portion with the wicked and unprofitable servant, in that outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth †."

† Matth. xxv. 30.

Thus

Thus have I exhibited a slight sketch of the character of him who "lives to himself." And from what hath been said, it appears, in some measure, that every Christian *ought* to render himself as useful as he can to society in general, as well as to those particular members of it with whom he hath the nearest connection. And in order to impress this duty more strongly on our minds, I proceed to the

SECOND thing I proposed; namely, to consider the nature and force of the obligation mankind are under to "live not to themselves," but to the good of others; which will be fully evident from the following observations:

First, That mankind are by nature one grand community, subdivided and branched out into lesser communities; and that their connection is mutual and indissoluble. It is not our common necessity, or our common convenience only, which hath united us together; but it is, also, our common nature. This is an union founded in our frame, and ordained and established by the author of our frame: and it is evident, that nothing can dissolve it; no power can dispense with it, unless we are weak enough to suppose, there is a person on earth, who can abrogate the first law of our nature. All mankind, then, without distinction, and without a single exception, of all languages and

nations and customs, compose one great family, of which the Creator is the common parent and head; and they are all endued with benevolent instincts and affections, and are formed for social intercourse, and for advancing each other's perfection and happiness. Accordingly, they are all brethren, united by a tie which is natural and indissoluble. Their relation does not depend on external and variable circumstances, but on their partaking of one nature, on their being made of one blood: it is the relation of man to man. Under this general denomination, each individual is allied to the whole species, however distributed, however divided. Our benevolence, therefore, should be unlimited and universal; we should cultivate an unfeigned affection to the whole human race, whatever inferior distinctions may subsist between us; and should be ready to do good to all men.

It is indeed impossible, that the actual exercise of our benevolence, that our good offices, should extend alike, if at all, to the whole community; much less to every individual of mankind; because many are distant and unknown, and some are too far above us. God's universal kingdom is therefore cantoned out into lesser provinces, into nations and neighbourhoods and families; which are, however, all subordinate to the grand community of which they are branches and members. And

our connections with these inferior clans cannot repeal the law of universal benevolence, or confine its exercise to their own members only; for notwithstanding these districts and divisions are our ordinary province of action, yet we should have minds rightly disposed to do good to all, and should discover this disposition as opportunity offers. For all men are our kindred. None should be considered by us as aliens, or strangers, or barbarians, when we have it in our power to give them assistance, and render them service. Every man hath a claim to our protection, to our good-will, to our relief, if he stands in need of it, and we are able to afford it; and we have a reciprocal claim on him. Be a man Jew or Gentile, Christian, Mohammedan, or Heathen, he is still a man; and, like ourselves, "the offspring of God †."

Our blessed Saviour has determined this point in the parable of the good Samaritan*; deciding, that though the Samaritan was a stranger, and even of an adverse nation; yet he was neighbour, or acted the part of a neighbour, to a plundered and mangled Jew, in binding up his wounds and taking care of him: thereby instructing us, that no civil or religious distinctions, and no animosities should be suffered to interrupt the course of our benevo-

† Acts xvii. 28.

* Luke x. 30, &c.

lence,

lence, even to strangers and enemies; and if not to them, much less to those with whom we are united by the same civil connections and interests, and by the profession of the same religion.

Nor will a good man content himself with cultivating, merely, benevolence and good-will to others. He will desire to give them the most substantial proofs of his kindness. His heart will be devising how he may best discover himself to be a friend to the whole human race; how his country, how posterity may be the better for him; as well as how he may do most good in that neighbourhood, and church, and family to which he stands related. He will esteem it his duty to take some pains, and to deny himself some innocent satisfactions, if thereby he may enlarge the sphere of his usefulness to others. And allow me to add, that he who is wholly unconcerned about his brother's welfare, when it is in his power to promote it, breaks a fundamental and immutable law of his nature; and is, to express myself in the most proper terms, a traitor to human society.

Farther, *Secondly*, Gratitude and justice demand that whatever favours and advantages I have received from others, I should either return to the same individuals, to society in general, or to some of its members. There is, as we have seen, a mutual dependence among mankind; we are mem-
bers

bers one of another. Nor is there any man, be he ever so exalted, or ever so low, who can justly say, that he could subsist, and enjoy life, with equal satisfaction and comfort alone, and without being beholden to any of his fellow-creatures. Indeed, persons in high life are too apt to conceive, that they are not dependent on, or beholden to, others; while others are wholly dependent on, or beholden to, them. And this may be comparatively, though it is not absolutely true. For there is not any man living, who is able to say, that he hath not received various benefits from others, and some of them of great importance to his felicity. And do not gratitude and justice then demand, that there should be some repayment, some requital? that there should be a mutual circulation of good offices? Or have we an original, and an exclusive right to the kindnesses of others, without being under any obligation to make a return? I apprehend no man can say this, without great vanity and arrogance. The benefits we receive from living in society, therefore, or from any individuals of our species, should enlarge our hearts, and cement and strengthen our social union, and incline us to copy the example by which we ourselves have so often, and so greatly profited.

Again, *Thirdly*, The flourishing state and prosperity of all communities, both greater and less, depend

depend on the usefulness, and mutual good offices, of individuals. We are all sensible of this in private families; a few diseased, torpid, inactive members are a dead weight on the whole, and find employment for the superior usefulness and activity of others. It is the same in all larger societies, in villages, and cities, and kingdoms, and throughout the world in general. Be the society greater or less, it is made up of individuals; it is a body compounded of several members; and consequently on the soundness and usefulness of each member depend the symmetry and beauty, the strength and security of the whole; and the diseased, or useless, palsied state of any particular member is threatening and dangerous to the whole constitution, or at least diminishes and impairs, for a time, its health and vigour.

There are few persons but are sensible of this, when they see others influenced by selfish views; and all men think it a reproach to have it said, or supposed, of them, that they have no concern for the public; and are ready enough to complain of the declension of public spirit. But while they are expressing their compassion for the public, or their resentment against others, are they not often pronouncing their own condemnation? What is the public, but a collection of individuals? It becomes me, therefore, as one of those individuals, if I am really concerned for the welfare of the
society

society of which I am a member, to do all the good I am able; knowing that it is every one's usefulness in his station, and according to his talents and capacity, which constitutes the sum total of national stability and happiness.

Perhaps some will be ready to say, What can such an insignificant person as I do for the good of others? The answer to this (whether it be affected modesty or real diffidence) is, No person is so insignificant but he may do much good, or much harm, to society. By a steady, regular, inflexible, exemplary discharge of his own duty, by doing good according to his capacity and opportunity, he may incite and provoke others to do their duty; that "seeing his good works," and doing likewise, they "may glorify their Father who is in heaven*." The Apostle exhorts Christians to "provoke one another to love, and to good works†."—It would be happy for us, if this were the only sort of provocation to be found among Christians.

Moreover, *Fourthly*, Love and harmony are promoted and invigorated by the cultivation and exercise of public spirit, and by a continual intercourse and exchange of good offices. And from a flow of benevolent affections, from peace and

* Matt. v. 16.

† Heb. x. 24.

harmony with all about us, springs an essential branch of our present happiness. The world is ruled by love: and it is a delightful spring of action. What more delightful than to have the soul composed and placid, and in unison with all around it; to think well of the rest of its species, and to look on them with complacency and good-will? It is a pleasant thing for brethren to dwell together in unity: no sight is so beautiful to the eye, no harmony so grateful to the ear. Nothing hath a greater tendency to sweeten life, to open a spring of joy within our own breasts, and to produce universal esteem and confidence among men, than an active benevolence, than good offices received and returned. Whereas on the contrary,

Fifthly, The worst evils flow from selfishness, vanity, dissipation, and thirst of pleasure. They render their votaries contemptible in the eyes of every beholder, at the same time that they enervate their minds, and make them utterly incapable of any inward, solid, rational satisfaction: whereas "the good man," the benevolent, public-spirited man, "is satisfied from himself*." But it is not only in depriving us of that inestimable blessing, calm self-enjoyment, that their malignant influence is discovered; they generally engender foul and furious passions, and are followed with a long

* Prov. xiv. 14.

train of self-tormentors. Pride, and envy, and jealousy, and malice are their natural offspring; and these kindle a consuming fire in our bosoms; and at the same time strike at the very root of society, and cut the band which holds it together; in the room of confidence, they introduce mutual distrust and animosity: men first grow indifferent, then morose; then hate, then bite and devour one another. All prey on the public, and at length, perhaps, perish with the public.

How far such reflections are applicable to ourselves, or to our country in general, I leave others to determine. And proceed to observe,

In the *last* place, That Divine Revelation hath expressly enjoined Benevolence and Public-spirit, and made them branches of religion. It would be endless to cite passages out of the books of Moses and the Prophets, wherein acts of kindness and good-will to others are represented as essential to religion. It suffices to observe, that our blessed Saviour hath determined, that “to love the Lord
“our God with all our heart, and with all our soul,
“and with all our mind, and with all our strength,
“is the first and great commandment; and that the
“second is like unto it, that we love our neighbour
“as ourselves: on these two commandments, saith
“he, hang all the law and the prophets.”

• Matt. xxii. 37, &c.

Under the Gospel nothing is more strongly, or solemnly, or repeatedly inculcated, than consulting the welfare of our fellow-creatures; in general, by an active useful course of life; in particular, by acts of beneficence. Our Saviour hath delivered several parables, in which he hath introduced the proceedings of the day of judgment: and I hardly remember any one of them, in which he does not represent the issue of that important day as depending either on acts of diligence, or acts of kindness. And to the same purport is the language of his Apostles. St. Paul, in particular, gives this direction to the Corinthians: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, says he, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem *."

If we accustomed ourselves to appropriate, to lay by some reasonable portion of our substance, to be distributed in public or private benefactions; it would not only be an evidence, that we looked upon beneficence to be, what it really is, a regular, stated branch of Christian duty; but we

• 1 Cor. xvi. 1—3.

should

should be likely to discharge this duty, as opportunity offered, with more cheerfulness and readiness, when we had recourse to a fund not applicable to our own private purposes, but upon the maturest judgment devoted solely to acts of charity and public utility. Such an appropriation therefore of some part of our substance will be an argument of our Christian prudence, if we are desirous of discharging this duty with regularity and with pleasure.

But lest, through avarice, inattention, or indifference to the concerns of our fellow-creatures, we should be remiss in performing this duty at all; let us frequently examine ourselves, what good we have at any time done, or neglected to do. This will be a probable means of exciting us, having first discovered our defects, to correct and amend them; and to improve all our talents, more than we have hitherto done, for the general good. It will put the young on guarding against an habit of pleasure; men of business, against too keen a desire of wealth; and the aged, against a sordid and covetous disposition: especially, if, at these seasons of self-enquiry, we compare our own faulty and imperfect characters with the complete and most exalted one of our divine master; who gave us an example of the most disinterested, and even unparalleled benevolence; an example, which we should

should always emulate, though we can never equal.

Perhaps some will say, this is talking as if we were to be saved by the merit of our works: whereas the Apostles of Christ affirm, that we are to be "saved by grace," and "through faith *," and "not by works of righteousness which we have done †." However, this is very consistent with what I am now asserting. The justification and acceptance of a sinner in the sight of God must, certainly, be through divine mercy in a Redeemer. Nevertheless it is as certain, that this mercy will not be vouchsafed to any, whose faith is not productive of "those fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God ‡." I say, it will be extended to none, who are indisposed to what was their great Master's "meat" and drink and delight; I mean, "going about, doing good ¶." It is the undoubted duty, and will be found in the issue to be the truest interest, of every one of us, to imitate him, whose life was one continued series of kind offices to the bodies and souls of men: to carry on, especially, that gracious design on which he came into the world; the spreading of the knowledge of his

* Eph. ii. 8.

† Phil. i. 11.

‡ Tit. iii. 5.

¶ Acts x. 38.

holy religion, and of the means of salvation through his mediation, to the ends of the earth.

And if this be an object, Christians, of any consequence in your esteem, you will, I doubt not, embrace every opportunity of discovering that it is so; particularly by contributing cheerfully and liberally, on this occasion, to the support and encouragement of that excellent establishment, for which I am now an advocate: I mean, the incorporated Society for propagating Christian Knowledge in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. It is true, it is, in part, the object of this society to propagate Christian knowledge among the American Indians; in which design, as appears by the latest, as well as several former accounts, their pious endeavours have been attended, through divine blessing, with considerable success: however, the principal regard of the society, agreeably to its charter, is directed to the spreading of the knowledge, and promoting of the practice, of true religion among the Highlands and Islands of Scotland: an object not only of vast importance, considered in the light of charity to individuals; but also, of great public utility. The inhabitants of those remote parts, taken collectively, are very numerous, and dispersed over a country of large extent. The generality of them are grossly ignorant, and very indigent; destitute of the means of instruction in religion and good morals, and in useful arts and occupations; and at the same time, exposed to the
insidious

insidious attempts of Romish emissaries, who appear among them in great numbers; and who make it their business, in which they are very zealous, and, unhappily, too successful, to convert them — into bad Christians and bad subjects.

To defeat these restless endeavours to mislead them, to dispel the mist of ignorance and superstition with which they are encompassed, and to bring them to the knowledge and practice of pure and genuine Christianity; for these ends this respectable society is empowered, by two royal charters, to erect schools, in those places where they shall appear to be most needed, for instructing children in the principles of the Christian religion, and in good morals; and for inuring them to an habit of industry, by employing them in agriculture, in handicraft trades, and in some of the more cheap and useful manufactures; and likewise for teaching them the English language, if they are ignorant of it, as many thousands of the inhabitants of the Highlands are.

It will, I think, be admitted, that providing for the instruction of children in religion and morals, and in some useful employment, is likely to be of more extensive and permanent benefit to any poor and numerous people; than if, in the neglect of this, the same pains were taken, and the same expence incurred, in attempting to instruct and reform those

those of them who are grown up, and of course confirmed, in ignorance and superstition, in idleness and vicious habits. And, accordingly, the success of the society's plan for instructing children, hath been answerable to this just expectation. It appears that, in the course of a few years, a wonderful change hath been wrought on the inhabitants of the Highlands; that there are to be found among them very few traces, comparatively, of that ferocity, and propensity to rapine and violence, for which they were once distinguished; and that a just knowledge of the true ends of life, of what is suitable to the characters of men, and of Christians, of reasonable, social, immortal beings, is in a fair way to gain still greater triumphs over the remains of ignorance and barbarism.

This encouraging state of things hath been, in part, ascribed, at least as far as concerns the reformation of their manners, and the progress of industry among them, to the abolition of their feudal tenures and hereditary jurisdictions about thirty years ago. By these tenures and jurisdictions they had been held down to an abject and servile dependence upon their immediate lords; their views were all confined within the narrow limits of an implicit subjection and obedience, and there was no room left for their entertaining a wish, or even an idea, of

E

improving

improving their condition. It was a noble and generous policy, which suggested, and accomplished the total suppression of this system of slavery; and thereby let them in to the full advantages of a free constitution; in consequence of which, they came to know and to *feel* their blessings. And thus the security and increase of liberty and happiness were found to be (as they ever will be) the best and most effectual means of securing the affection and obedience of subjects, to those who are set over them as their civil governors.

But though the abolition of these tenures deserves to be mentioned, as a partial cause of the reformation observable among the inhabitants of the Highlands; yet, I apprehend that reformation to be owing, in a much greater degree, and in more important respects, to the laudable and well-directed efforts of this society. The instructions bestowed upon such multitudes of children, during the course of years that schools have been supported by them in various parts of the country, could not fail of producing (as they have produced) prodigious improvement among the people. Nevertheless, though much hath been already done, more still remains to be done. At present there are nearly EIGHT THOUSAND children under instruction: and provided, by the contributions

of the benevolent and well-disposed, the society shall be enabled to increase their numbers in any proportion to the demand there is for such increase; it may be justly expected, that that part of the united kingdom of which I am now speaking, the Highlands and Islands (from whence our excellent constitution, and the Protestant succession to the crown, in the illustrious house of Brunswick, were formerly threatened with extirpation) will, every day, prove a more valuable accession to our national strength, prosperity, and honour. And (what is of infinitely more consequence in the regard of every true Christian) not a few, I trust, made acquainted with Jesus Christ, and with Salvation by him, through the instruction received in those schools, and born again by the Word and Spirit of God, to the happiness of reasonable and immortal beings;—numbers of such, I hope, will have reason to bless God to all Eternity, for the benefit they derived from that laudable institution, which now, by me, solicits your benefactions. And, I am persuaded, Christians, that you have too much regard for the happiness, temporal and spiritual, of your fellow-creatures; for the permanent prosperity of the public, for the glory of God, and for the interest of your Redeemer in the world, to permit me, on this occasion, to be wholly an unsuccessful advocate.

And

And now, may the liberal contributions, which, I doubt not, you will cheerfully bestow, come up as a memorial before God, and be returned to you in "every good and perfect gift, from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning," through Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom be glory, both now, and for ever. Amen.

THE END.

4 OCT 58

Form of a Bequest or Legacy.

Item, **I** GIVE and bequeath the sum of _____ to the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, to be applied (*either to the purposes of the first or second Patent, as the Donor pleases.*)

N. B. The first patent respects the instruction of the children in the Society's schools, where they are educated in the principles of the Protestant Religion and Loyalty, and taught reading, writing, arithmetic, &c. The second Patent authorises their being bred up to useful labour and industry, in agriculture, manufactures, and handicrafts.

Benefactions for the use of the Society will be received in London, as under:

By James Coutts, Esq; Banker in the Strand,
Treasurer to the Correspondent Board;

John Mackintosh, Esq; Lothbury, Secretary;

John Drummond, Esq; and Co. Bankers,
Charing-cross;

William Fuller, Esq; and Son, Bankers,
Lombard-street.

Plan of a Bazaar & Lottery

That, FIVE and upwards the sum of
to the Society in

to be applied to the
of the Society, to the

M. B. The first part of the institution of
the children in the Society's schools, where they
are educated in the principles of the Protestant
religion, and taught to read, write, and
sing. The second part of the plan is to
raise their spirits up to useful labour and in-
dustry, in agriculture, manufactures, and handi-
crafts.

4 00 58

Benefactions for the use of the Society will be
received in London, or where

By James Couper, Esq. Secretary to the Society
Theobald to the Corporation of London
John M. Johnson, Esq. Secretary to the Society
John D. Johnson, Esq. Secretary to the Society
C. Johnson, Esq.

William Folger, Esq. and Son, Bankers
London